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TCS-4225-58

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HIGHEST PRIORITY REQUIREMENTS

Introduction

1. The highest priority objective for collection of TALENT materials is to secure coverage of those specific targets which would enable the US to prepare for and protect itself against an air offensive against the United States and, secondarily, its territorial possessions and bases abroad. Current estimates are that USSR could not successfully launch an air offensive against the United States at this time. Accordingly, our principal intelligence objective has to do with their capabilities in this regard in the future.

2. Closely akin to the threat of ICBM is the threat of IRBM launched from submarine either from nuclear powered or conventional craft. It could well be that the threat from such a source about which we know practically nothing could in the immediate future exceed that from the ICBM and certainly, if and when it is developed, be used concurrently with the ICBM.

3. The biggest threat at the moment in this regard appears to be from the ICBM, which may now possibly be in a state of operational

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deployment though we cannot be sure of this, and we have no solid information as to how or where. There are tentative conclusions that the Russians probably are using a rail mobile scheme involving either launch from trains or from hard sites or both. By deduction certain areas have been selected as most probable for such deployment. In any event, it is judged of prime importance to secure the answer to this question as soon as possible.

4. Evidence to date strongly suggests that the USSR is not depending upon the BISON as the vehicle for delivering a lethal blow against the United States, and fragmentary evidence suggests a concentration on the development of some new manned aircraft with capabilities more extensive than the BISON.

5. Whereas there is a sizeable margin of error allowed in the estimates regarding USSR nuclear stockpile for use in warheads against the United States, it is estimated that the USSR has the capability to produce, or has already produced, enough for any major air offensive against the US, whether this be by guided missile or by manned aircraft.

6. Of major interest to our allies in Europe is the IRBM. The existence of a capability here is recognized as a fact. The question remaining is the exact locations of the launch points. Both because

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this is a threat to our allies and a threat to our overseas bases, it is also of major concern to the US.

7. Along with the IRBM there is, of course, the concern for the potential use against our allies and overseas bases of existing BISON and BEAR capabilities, though the examination of the bases from which these would be launched as well as the IRBM launch sites are lower in priority than these aforementioned problems, which are a direct threat against the US proper.

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